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Profile

November 1980

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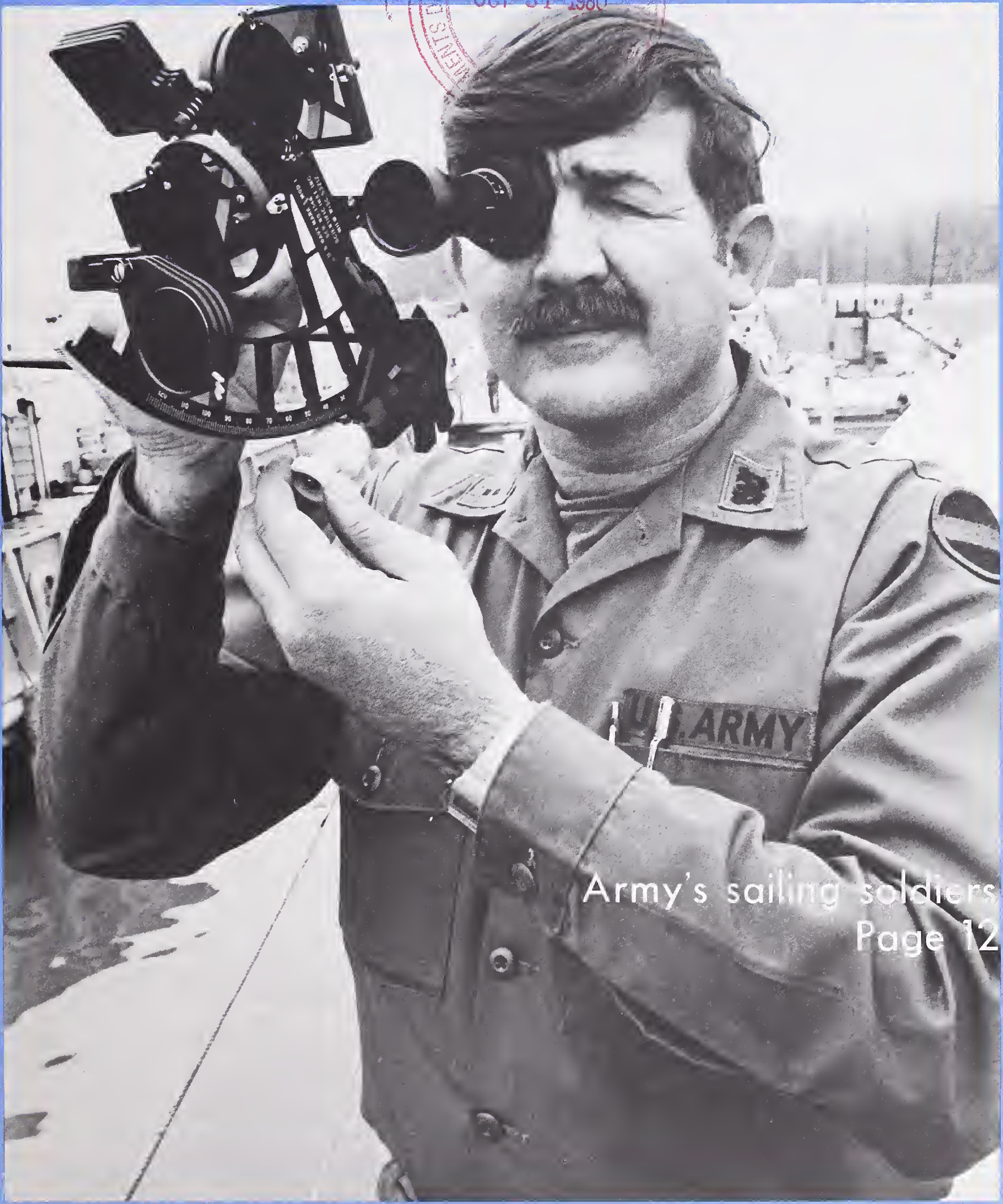

Army's sailing soldiers
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Memo to readers

This year marks the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the establishment of the Department of Defense High School News Service and its service to high schools, colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada.

High School News Service was created to fill a communications void between students and the military, at a time when service was compulsory and information on the Armed Forces was not readily available.

During the past 25 years, our schools, the military and service to the nation through the military have changed drastically. The military, no longer a compulsory service, is viewed as another career choice for graduating students. Despite these changes, a great void still remains between the student and the military. Most students' knowledge of the Armed Forces is founded in their fathers' and uncles' reminiscence of the barren life styles endured during their mandatory service.

If these men would return to the military today, they would recognize little of their previous experiences. The services have come a long way in 25 years, and during the next quarter century will go even further. The military no longer needs the high school dropout or the malcontent it once accepted. Today's military person must be able to work without supervision and accept responsibility for personal actions as well as for the defense of the United States at an ever increasing younger age. The military no longer depends on the foot soldier as the mainstay of our defense, but is looking for the individual who can contribute to the movement toward space, technology and education.

Education is the key in the military for 1980 and the coming years. The new military "person" (no longer man, since women are playing a major role in the Armed Forces today) must be able to understand the new technology of STEALTH aircraft, laser guided weapons and nuclear powered ships.

More and more, the military is depending on the high schools, colleges and universities to provide the technologically trained men and women to manage and operate our nation's defenses. But education does not stop when a person enters the military. In fact, it increases. The military returns thousands of its people each year to universities across America to complete masters and doctorate programs. Almost every enlisted person receives some formal training, many at advanced technological training schools.

Educational opportunities are plentiful for military members or people who are willing to serve their country. The Reserve Officers Training Corps Scholarship Program offers a free education at many of the top colleges and universities in America to men and women who qualify, in return for military service as a commissioned officer.

More information on this program and other continuing educational programs, plus features on career fields, human action programs and life styles in the military will be featured in upcoming issues of PROFILE. Please take the time to read these and then pass the magazine on to fellow students, educators and administrators.

Profile

UNIV. OF FLORIDA LIBS.
DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT
U.S. DEPOSITORY

November 1980
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The purpose of this magazine is to inform young people and guidance personnel about benefits, opportunities, privileges and programs of military service.

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Back cover photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brice Kenny

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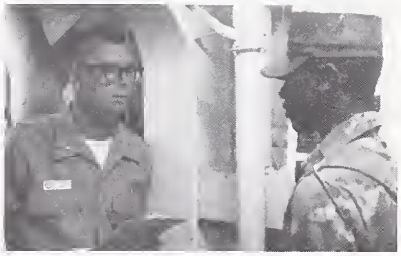

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Springboard to electronics

Anthony P. Cardoza, a Navy electronics technician from Teaticket, Mass., works on an ultra-high frequency transceiver aboard the amphibious transport dock USS Nashville. (Photo by Caleb P. Maher III)

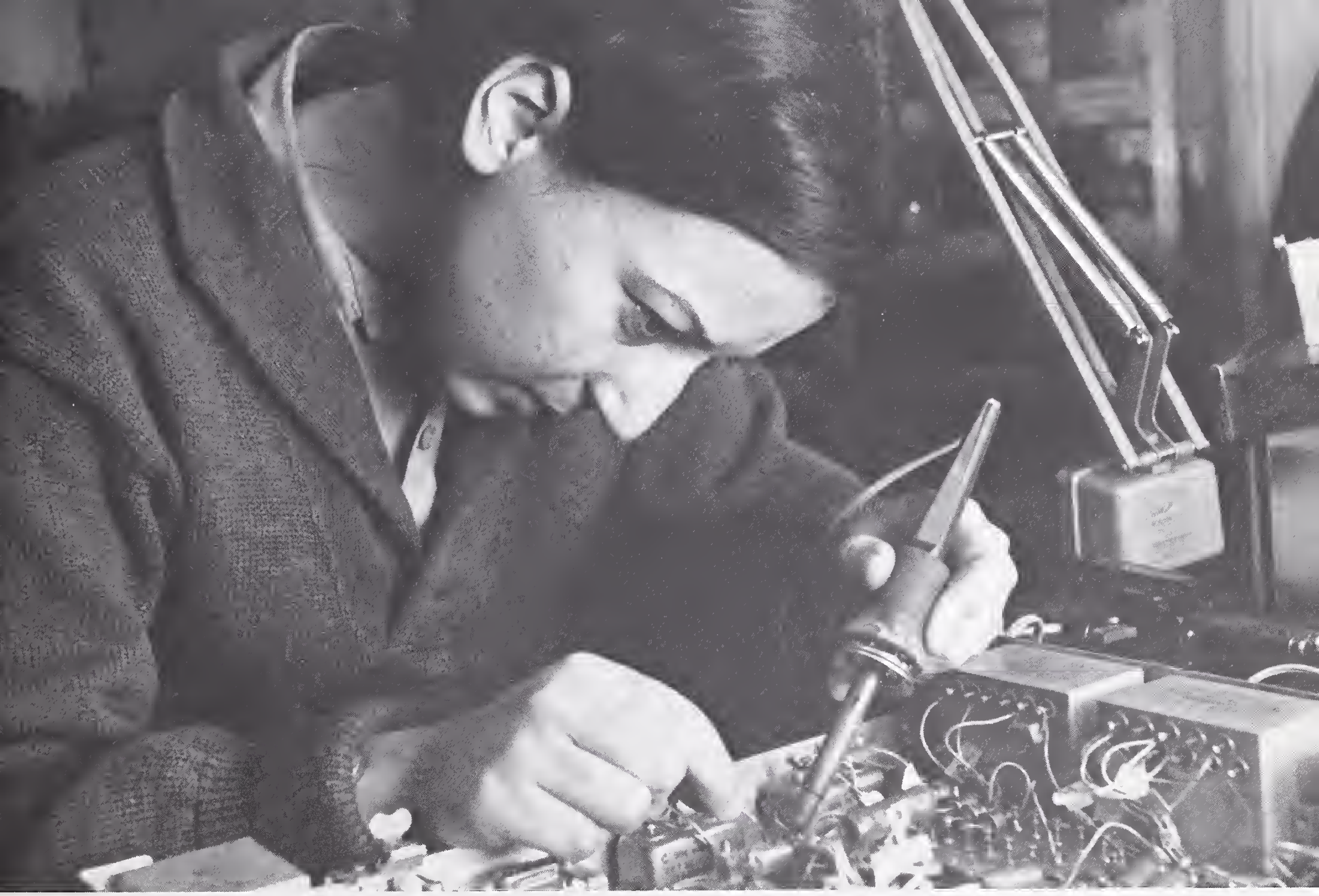
It's said when one gets his or her wires crossed, mistakes are bound to occur. This being the case, the U.S. Navy Electronics Technician (ET) trains very hard to never cross wires.

One of the many interesting jobs in the Navy is that of the ET. After eight weeks of recruit training at either Great Lakes, Ill., San Diego, Calif., or Orlando, Fla., the electronics field candidate is enrolled in one of four schools. These schools, located in Great Lakes, Orlando, San Diego and Memphis, Tenn., are linked by computer and function as a single unit.

As a prospective technician in the Navy's ET field, a man or woman must have normal color perception and hearing, be eligible for access to classified information and achieve an acceptable score on a battery of aptitude tests administered by a Navy recruiter or by other official testing personnel.

The ability to accomplish the electronics' mission isn't acquired overnight. The basic electronics school offers eight extensive weeks of training to prepare Navy ETs to cope with the multitudes of situations in the field.

Students carry a heavy academic workload, which includes nearly 500 tests and practical applications. The final phase of the basic ET school gives the student the opportunity to learn proper troubleshooting techniques. The trainee uses sophisticated equipment ranging from oscilloscopes to signal generators. This phase also allows the student to



Electronics technician Beverly R. Ahlborn works on a piece of communication gear aboard the USS L.Y. Spear. The submarine tender was the second Navy ship to have women assigned in its crew. (Photo by Bill Pointer)

demonstrate his or her understanding of various electronics components and theories.

Once the prospective Navy ET has completed the basic course, he or she moves onto more definitive instruction at the Electronics Technician 'A' School at Great Lakes. Here, a student receives up to 28 weeks of more advanced electronics training.

For some students, schooling does not end there. They may attend 'C' school, where the selected Navy ET receives follow-on training for a specific piece of equipment. The 'C' schools provide from four to 13 weeks of highly specialized, intensive instruction.

Attesting to the high regard with which the Navy Electronics Technical Schools training is held, the Northern Illinois College Association offers 14 college credits to graduates of the program. This provides a springboard for more advanced education in specialized electronics to those wishing to enhance their abilities even further.

Navy ETs assume a wide range of responsibilities. They adjust, repair and calibrate a broad spectrum of electronics equipment in general use in the surface and sub-surface Navy. They also analyze the performance of electronics equipment, radar search systems, navigation systems and other advanced electronic equipment. In addition, Navy ETs assume a greater degree of responsibility earlier in their careers than many civilian counterparts.

Electronics technicians serve on all types of ships and shore commands having electronics equipment. Petty Officers 2nd Class Dave Hirschman and Phil Darrow described their duties as ETs on board the 292-foot nuclear submarine Archerfish, during a recent under-the-ice cruise to the North Pole.

"My job is to maintain and operate the ship's electronic surveillance measures equipment," explained Hirschman, a 21 year-old from Rochester, N.Y. "Among other things, I have to determine how much free water is above and below the ship to ensure safe operation."

Working in the reactor control division of the Archerfish, Darrow, a 22 year-old from Huntington, Mass., described his duties. "I help operate, maintain and repair electrical systems associated with the surface as a safety zone to work from in case of an emergency, like loss of electrical power, propulsion or atmospheric control. Under the ice, recovery would be much more difficult.''

The two men are members of the 120-man crew on board the Archerfish that cruised submerged for 48 days, covering 10,000 miles of a 13,000 mile voyage from the East Coast of the United States to the North Pole.

There are women in the ET field, but because of the non-combative role they must play in the U.S. military in accordance with federal laws, they are assigned only to support positions.

''I was interested in the Navy or the Air Force,'' said Petty Officer 2nd Class Beverly Ahlborn, an ET assigned to the submarine tender USS L.Y. Spear. ''I chose the Navy because it had more opportunities for advanced training. I'd say I have about the equivalent of three college semesters in electronics.''

The 23 year-old Navy woman supervises three other technicians in her shop and she says being a good manager means presenting a job to someone in the right way.

''Common sense is the one thing a good electronics technician needs,'' she said. ''You can have all kinds of technical knowledge, but if you don't have common sense you can't put it into use.''

The Michigan native was assigned to the USS L.Y. Spear under a modification of federal law signed by President Carter in October 1978. Until that modification was signed, Navy women could serve only on hospital ships or transports and there were none in commission. The new law permits women to be permanently assigned to non-combatant ships, like the USS L.Y. Spear, and temporarily serve on other ships not expected to do battle.

Ahlborn was among the first women to serve on the 643-foot, 22,600 ton submarine tender. The ship was the second in the Navy to have both women officers and enlisted members in its crew. Presently there are 89 enlisted women and four female officers aboard. The crew totals more than 1,000 men and women.

The type of individual who makes it to the top of the Navy ET field is ambitious and proud of the job. Hirschman, Darrow, and Ahlborn are examples of that kind of individual. They have trained long and hard to get whatever job they are assigned done correctly the first time; to never cross wires—to never make a mistake.

Editor's note: PROFILE wishes to thank the journalists at the Navy Public Affairs Center, Norfolk, Va., for their research and cooperation in writing this article.

Helicopter carrier crewman O.C. Sorrells, an aviation electronics technician works aboard the USS Guam. Electronics technicians serve on all types of ships and shore commands having electronics equipment. (Photo by Mike McCabe)

In addition to "hands on" training, Navy electronics technicians must study as well. Students at the Navy schools carry a heavy academic workload, which includes nearly 500 tests and practical applications. (Photo by Lon Cabot)

Dave Hirschman, a graduate of James E. Sperry High School in Henrietta, N.Y., operates radio equipment aboard the submarine USS Archerfish. Hirschman's submarine just returned from a voyage to the North Pole. (Photo by Mike McCabe)

It's an explosive business

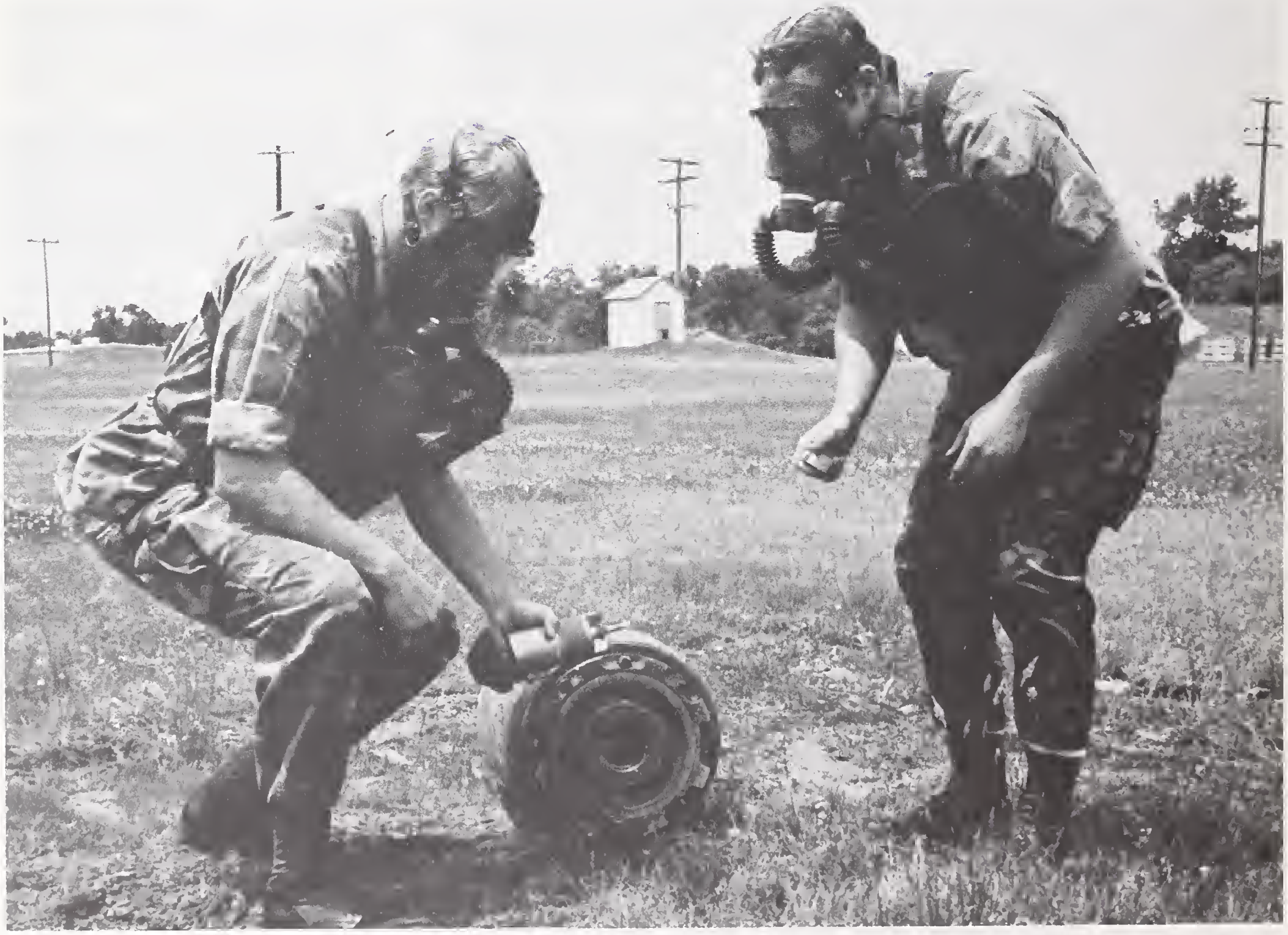
By Wilt Baker and Dick Sheffield

Jim Rogers is a member of an elite group of specialists who works in a very explosive business. Rogers, a senior airman in the United States Air Force, works as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team member at Langley AFB, Va.

"I was sitting home pounding nails and frying burgers when I decided to volunteer for the Air Force," Airman Rogers recalled recently, while on break from a class taught by a co-worker on how to disarm a Russian missile. "When I went into the recruiting station and talked with the recruiter, he offered me security police or EOD."

Rogers was a little perplexed as to what EOD was until his recruiter explained it as being a bomb squad member. "That's for me," the Harriman, Tenn., native said.

The new airman was to spend the next six and half months in military schools. The first stop was Lackland AFB, Texas for six weeks of Air Force basic training. He then



Senior Airman Jim Rogers (l) and Staff Sgt. Glenn Williams (r), Explosive Ordnance Disposal team members at Langley AFB, Va., wear self-contained breathing apparatus while removing the fuse from a "simulated" chemical bomb. EOD personnel are trained to handle chemical, conventional and nuclear weapons.

proceeded to five months of grueling work and study to become a member of the elite Air Force EOD team.

The explosive ordnance school, which has been compared to a four-year college cram course in explosives, is divided into two sections. The first phase of EOD training is conducted at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Ala., where students learn to work with chemical and biological agents found in unexploded ordnance. This phase is two weeks long, with training conducted in classrooms and in the field. The second phase of training takes the student to Indian Head, Md., a community of 2,500 located 30 miles south of Washington, D.C. Here the next four and half months are spent learning the ins and outs of explosive devices.

The EOD school is managed by the Navy and trains members from all the military services in the science of explosive ordnance identification and disposal—everything from the laws of chemical reactions to handling nuclear warheads.

Operating 50 weeks a year, the school annually trains 2,000 technicians, including law enforcement officials and agents from federal agencies. Students from 52 countries have been trained there.

The school is divided into six primary areas of study—the core curriculum on basic tools and methods, air ordnance, ground ordnance, nuclear weapons, specialized ordnance and underwater ordnance (for Navy personnel only).

Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist Senior Airman Jim Rogers uses an electronic stethoscope to examine a suspicious object atop a stack of inert 750 pound bombs.

''Most of the students have never seen a bomb or rocket,'' explained one instructor. ''They don't know whether what they're seeing is an engine part from a 1967 VW, or what.''

''It's like learning how the human body functions,'' said one student. ''You have to study all the parts.''

The students first study applied physics and explosive effects in the core program, before learning the use of proper tools and methods for defusing.

In the 25 academic days allotted to air ordnance, students identify components in gun systems, bombs, guided missiles, sea-launched devices, and aircraft systems that require explosives, such as ejection seats and pylons. In ground ordnance, students are taught to differentiate between explosives that are placed, projected or thrown and whether they're antipersonnel, materiel or vehicular explosives. In addition, students receive instruction in employment of these explosives, as well as procedures that are used to separate the fusing and the main charge, thus interrupting the firing train.

''The only way to survive in this business is to be better qualified than the person who built the explosives,'' said Master Sgt. Drake Conklin, an Air Force instructor at the school. ''When you get to the field, those facts memorized in the classroom will carry you through—if you also have the common sense and the experience.''

EOD teams get that experience in the school's practical areas where ordnance (marked by orange stakes) is buried in leaves, stuck in the mud or floated in a brook. In the eight days allocated to studying ground ordnance, four are spent on briefings and instructor demonstrations. Students then take part in practice sessions, are critiqued, and finally graded on tests with time limits.

Technicians do whatever is necessary to prevent injuries. Although most practical problems involve inert ordnance, the school does keep students honest and alert at its Stump Neck Annex, about 12 miles from Indian Head. There students learn how to clear a range area by forming a sweep line to identify and mark devices, as they would after practice bombing runs were made in the Nevada desert.

''We have some devices monitored,'' said Cmdr. Joseph T. Kennedy, the school's commanding officer. ''When a student makes a mistake, there will be a small, controlled explosion nearby, so he'll realize he's made a mistake. It's very graphic and memorable.''

The difficulty of the EOD course and the seriousness with which it is taught are evident in the 35 percent attrition rate. Most would agree that learning to take the bang out of a bomb is one of the most difficult academic courses in the Department of Defense.

Few students survive without at least one failure. Extra study is a must. Students spend two to three hours each night and four to six hours on weekends in special group study halls.

''You **must** want to be an EOD technician to get out of the school.'' said Staff Sgt. Samuel R. Lehman, another EOD team member at Langley.

Upon graduation, Air Force personnel join an elite group of men and women in the career field. There are fewer than 700 personnel, enlisted and officer, in the speciality, who are assigned at more than 50 bases throughout the world. They respond to bomb threats, clear practice bombing ranges and provide expertise whenever explosives are involved—whether it's dynamite or nuclear weapons.

Some people seem to think being an EOD team member is a romantic adventure, like belonging to a SWAT team. They soon discover that the field deals in pure science. Everything they do is written down, analyzed and double-checked. They also do a lot of dirty work, like clearing ranges when it's hot, dry and dusty.

''Bombing ranges offer the most challenges,'' said Airman Rogers. ''The sun is hot. The exhaust from the truck is blowing in your face choking you, and then you have to

Staff Sgt. Glenn Williams demonstrates removing the fuse from a 500 pound bomb. Williams is an Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist at Langley AFB, Va.

Portable X-ray equipment is set up by Staff Sgts. Glenn Williams and Hank Domme to examine a briefcase which is suspected to contain an explosive device. Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel use a variety of instruments to disarm explosive devices.

pick up a dump truck full of bombs. We must fight becoming complacent.''

Langley does not have a bombing range, so team members pull temporary duty at Nellis AFB, Nev., to assist EOD members assigned there recover the ordnance dropped on practice bombing runs.

EOD students and team members rarely think of danger because they're too busy worrying about nomenclature, fuse functions and the like. Certain situations require steady nerves and steady hands, but not the eye of an eagle or the hands of a surgeon. Although EOD teams are not suicide squads, they're not anxious to play Superman, either.

''I don't have time to think of being scared or of pressure,'' said Staff Sgt. Glenn Williams. ''The rush, or high, comes afterward.''

''If you expected it to go boom, you wouldn't go near it,'' explained Master Sgt. Conklin, ''and when we finish, we don't expect any applause. Macho is great in the bar, but in the field you need experience and knowledge.''

''Explosive devices were first handled in World War II by British volunteers who paid a dear price because they had no training or experience,'' said Cmdr. Kennedy. ''They used common sense and logic, but the Germans soon found different ways of trapping the defuser.''

Instructors at the Indian Head school cite an example of a British expert who disarmed bombs by firing a pistol into the device, thus destroying the timing mechanism located in the front of the explosive. When the Germans heard about the successful procedure, they switched the placement of the devices. The English expert's next shot was his last.

''You know you're duty bound and there may come a time when you have to prove to yourself and your peers that you've earned your badge,'' said Master Sgt. Conklin. ''You must take that final chance, if the situation dictates it.''

Most EOD personnel will not be exposed to a critical situation in two or three enlistments, but somewhere down the line, an EOD technician will be required to put his or her life on the line at least once, and that's enough.

Photos by Wilt Baker

Soldiers who sail

The William J. Sutton is the largest cargo vessel in the Army. At 339 feet long, the Sutton houses nine officers and 44 enlisted men and women.

**Story and photos by
Herbert Thweatt**

Contrary to popular belief, the Navy and Coast Guard do not possess the largest number of small sailing vessels in the U.S. military. The Army Transportation Corps does, along with the soldiers who sail them.

The Army Transportation School at Ft. Eustis, Va., is the home and training port for adventurous, seafaring soldiers who have the blast of the fog horn in their hearts and salt water in their veins. Young people eager for the smell of salt air and the challenge of a ''different'' job involving great responsibility find the Army's school a sure, quick way to become certified watercraft operators.

''I was always interested in the sea and always wanted to be out on it,'' said Pvt. 2 James Malsch, III, a 20 year-old watercraft operator from Youngstown, Ohio. ''My brothers and sister ask what it's like being in the Army and working on a landing craft utility (LCU) and I tell them it's like any other job. It has its ups and downs.''

Malsch has the Military Occupational Speciality (MOS) 61-B, Watercraft Operator, and is serving on board an LCU homeported at Ft. Eustis. ''At the moment, I enjoy my job so much that I've been considering staying in for my 20 years (the time needed for retirement). If I ever decide to get out, I've heard of guys with my

Operating a Lighter Amphibious Resupply, Cargo (LARC) vessel, Pfc. Yvette Way has proven herself to be a skillful pilot.

Used to being in interesting places, Staff Sgt. Benjamin Tellez is crew chief of this LARC-LX.

skills who take civilian jobs and earn between 14 and 15 bucks an hour.''

Watercraft operators undergo extensive training because they are responsible for very valuable equipment, cargo, troops, and the lives of other crew members who help in the vessel's operation. Training for certification consists of fire fighting, water survival, reading navigational charts, first aid, piloting, and weather studies. Proficiency in emergency drills and recognition of international codes and flags is mandatory.

''This is the William J. Sutton, a U.S. Army cargo vessel that was built in 1945,'' said Spec. 4 Ted Blanton, a 61-C, watercraft engineer, from Fairfax County, Va. Blanton was in the engine room checking the dials and meters that indicate whether the ship's six cylinder diesel fueled engine was operating properly or needed special attention.

''I was originally trained as a 61-B, watercraft operator, but I really preferred work in the engine room, so I OJTed (on the job trained) and was certified a 61-C,'' he explained.

Watercraft personnel train as both operators and engineers, so if the need arises, the mission can be accomplished in the event a key person becomes sick or injured. A watercraft crewmember may serve on a variety of vessels during his or her career. The crane, tug, cargo vessel, LCU boats, and the lighter amphibious, resupply, cargo (LARC) land and water vessels are prime examples of the various watercraft involved based on mission assignments.

The larger vessels are commanded by warrant officers; the smaller ones by coxswains (an enlisted person acting as steersman and in charge of the vessel). The quartermasters (enlisted persons who attend the ship's compass, navigation, signals, and charts) are tasked with assisting the warrant officer commanders. Seamen, usually E-1 thru E-4, keep the vessels in sailing condition by performing valuable jobs. Their duties consist of vessel upkeep and hands-on training, such as painting and maintaining the deck, and piloting the vessel while under the supervision of a non-commissioned officer or an officer.

''A young person can go from

private to warrant officer before retiring," said Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Cunningham, a native of Northfield, Mass. "I came into the watercraft field as a staff sergeant from a combat arms MOS. Now I command my own LCU and it's a very rewarding feeling."

The 79th Transportation Battalion at Ft. Story, Va., is another very important training area for watercraft operators. Several miles from Ft. Eustis, at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, Ft. Story offers soldiers training on the LARC and has ideal terrain and sea conditions for land navigation and waterborne maneuvers.

"You could describe the LARC as a boat that doubles as a truck or vice versa," joked Staff Sgt. Benjamin Tellez, crew chief of a 197-ton, 67-foot LARC. "When the craft is on the sea, it has a range of 75 miles; when on dry land, 150 miles. In emergencies the LARC can carry 200 troops. Under normal conditions the vessel's mission is to ferry heavy loads of cargo from ship to shore."

Tellez used his special skills this past year during the clean-up of Eniwetok Atoll, the south Pacific island used during the 1950's for United States nuclear testing. During the clean-up, he helped to ferry men and equipment to and from the island, so they could collect and deposit radioactive debris in a bomb crater. The bomb crater was later covered with a concrete dome where it will remain radioactive for thousands of years.

"More than 3,000 soldiers worked at Eniwetok and from my understanding, we will receive the Humanitarian Service Medal," said Tellez. Sergeant Tellez and all other military personnel who worked more than 24 continuous hours at Eniwetok between Jan. 24, 1977 and April 15, 1980, were authorized the award of the Humanitarian Service Medal this past June.

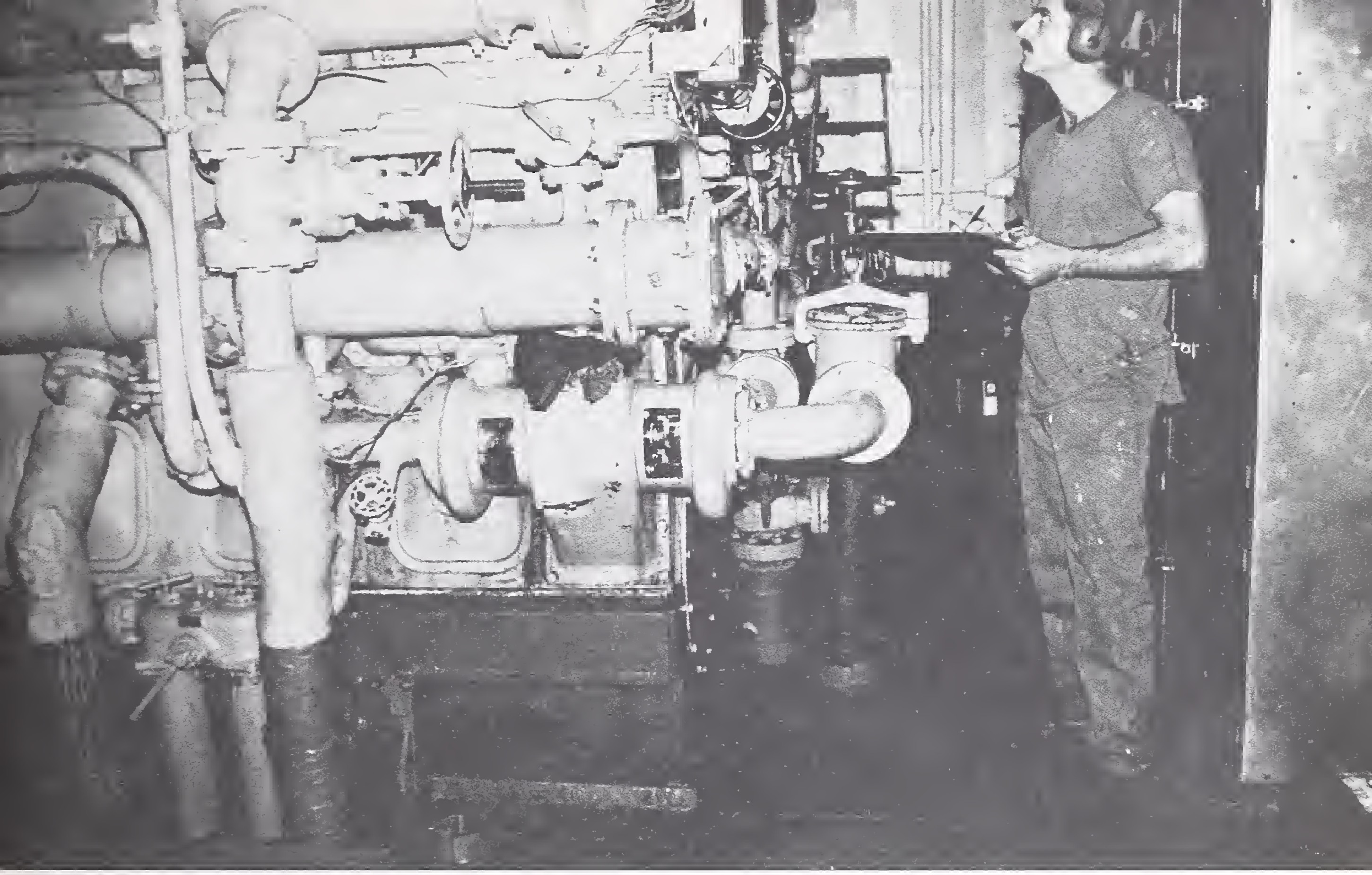
Painting the deck of this cargo vessel is one of the many duties required of the Army "seaman" (E-1 through E-4).

Most of the soldiers who operate the LARC were not born when the first vessel design came off the drawing boards. The LARC was invented during World War II to meet the needs of amphibious operations in the Pacific.

"Being a LARC operator wasn't my first choice of duty, but now I really enjoy my job as coxswain. I have my own vessel to maintain and it's so much fun," said Pfc. Yvette Way, a 20 year-old, who seriously considers the entire United States her hometown. "My father was in the Air Force and we lived all over the country—so I guess America is my hometown."

Watercraft operators are limited to a few choice anchorages; places like Forts Eustis and Story in Va., the Hawaiian Islands, the Panama Canal Zone, the Azores Islands and Korea are called homeport by seagoing soldiers.

Operators and engineers navigate their vessels across oceans and seas, along river shores, coastlines, and from ship to shore. In many cases the young men and women take these jobs not for the sake of duty, but to answer the call of adventure. For this basic reason there will always be—soldiers who sail.



Spec. 4 Ted Blanton reads and records from sensitive gauges that indicate the performance of his vessel's engine. Blanton, a watercraft engineer, is also trained as a watercraft operator.

Operating their LARC vessel from Ft. Story, Va., this watercraft crew is constantly training to improve their seamanship skills as "sailing soldiers."

The adventure begins here

During initial orientation, Sea School students visit various types of Navy ships in the San Diego area.

When the Continental Congress resolved in 1775 that two battalions of Marines be raised, it did not state that their duty would be limited to land. For 205 years, the Marine Corps has been an integral part of the Navy team and Marines considered ''good seamen or so acquainted with maritime affairs''have met the challenge of serving at sea.

While traveling to exotic ports and representing the Marine Corps worldwide for two centuries, ''a few good men'' have been serving proudly as ''soldiers of the sea.'' Today, the seagoing Marines' adventure begins with Sea School.

Located at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, the school's curriculum provides a basic level of proficiency necessary to assume duties with a Marine detachment aboard ship. Sea School, the only one of its kind in the Marine Corps, stresses both physical and academic training, as well as practical application.

''Sea School is one of the most demanding formal schools in the Marine Corps,'' stated Sgt. Bob Carson, a class commander. ''Standards are high and only top quality men are accepted.''

During the five-week course, emphasis is placed on naval orientation, duties while at sea, general military subjects which have a direct application to shipboard duties, personal appearance and physical fitness.

To become accustomed to shipboard life, Naval terminology and rank structure are stressed, along

Security guard duty is a vital responsibility of sea-going Marines. Here, a Marine assigned to the Marine Detachment aboard the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk, checks a sailor's security pass to a restricted area.

with classes on emergency drills, firefighting, water conservation and damage control.

But before a young man envisions fantasies of the sunset in the Pacific or moonlit nights over the Caribbean, he must first meet and challenge the task of recruit training. After successful graduation from ''boot camp'' and having been assigned as infantrymen, potential sea-duty Marines are personally screened at the infantry training school at Camp Pendleton, Calif. or Camp Lejeune, N.C.

According to Gunnery Sgt. R. B. Zachary, Sea School gunnery sergeant, certain prerequisites must be met before a Marine is accepted for Sea School. ''Each Marine must be a U.S. citizen with no record of convictions for drug or alcohol abuse,'' he stated. ''Standards for personal appearance are high and we require a minimum height of 68 inches with weight proportionate.''

As with the entire Marine Corps, physical fitness is stressed at Sea School.

Although married Marines are not restricted from attending the school, Gunnery Sgt. Zachary explains that sea duty is probably better suited for the single man. ''While assigned aboard a ship, a Marine will find himself away from home for much of his tour of duty. We have found that this puts an undue strain on young married couples. This is not to say that a married Marine should not pull sea duty. It is, however, an attempt to inform him of what he can expect as a sea-going Marine.''

While attending Sea School, a Marine can ''expect'' to learn. During the first week, while processing is being completed,

While touring various Navy ships, Sea School students are given a working knowledge of the Navy and some of its equipment, and are afforded the chance to talk to Marines already assigned to sea duty.

students are given a tour of Navy ships in the San Diego area. Here, they receive a working knowledge of the Navy with some of its equipment, and are afforded the opportunity to talk to sailors and Marines already assigned to sea duty.

Petty Officer First Class Gilbert Norwalk, the Sea School's Navy instructor, presents Naval orientation classes to the students. "These Marines are new to shipboard life, so it is my job to give them a basic understanding of Naval terminology and introduce them to the Navy way of life," stated the gunner's mate. "I instruct them on the Navy's customs and courtesies, plus its history and traditions. These are subjects that every sailor and sea-going Marine are required to know."

A large portion of the students' time is spent on weapons training. While the .45-caliber pistol is the Marines' duty weapon, they must also be familiar with the M-870 shotgun, M-16 service rifle and the M-60 machine gun.

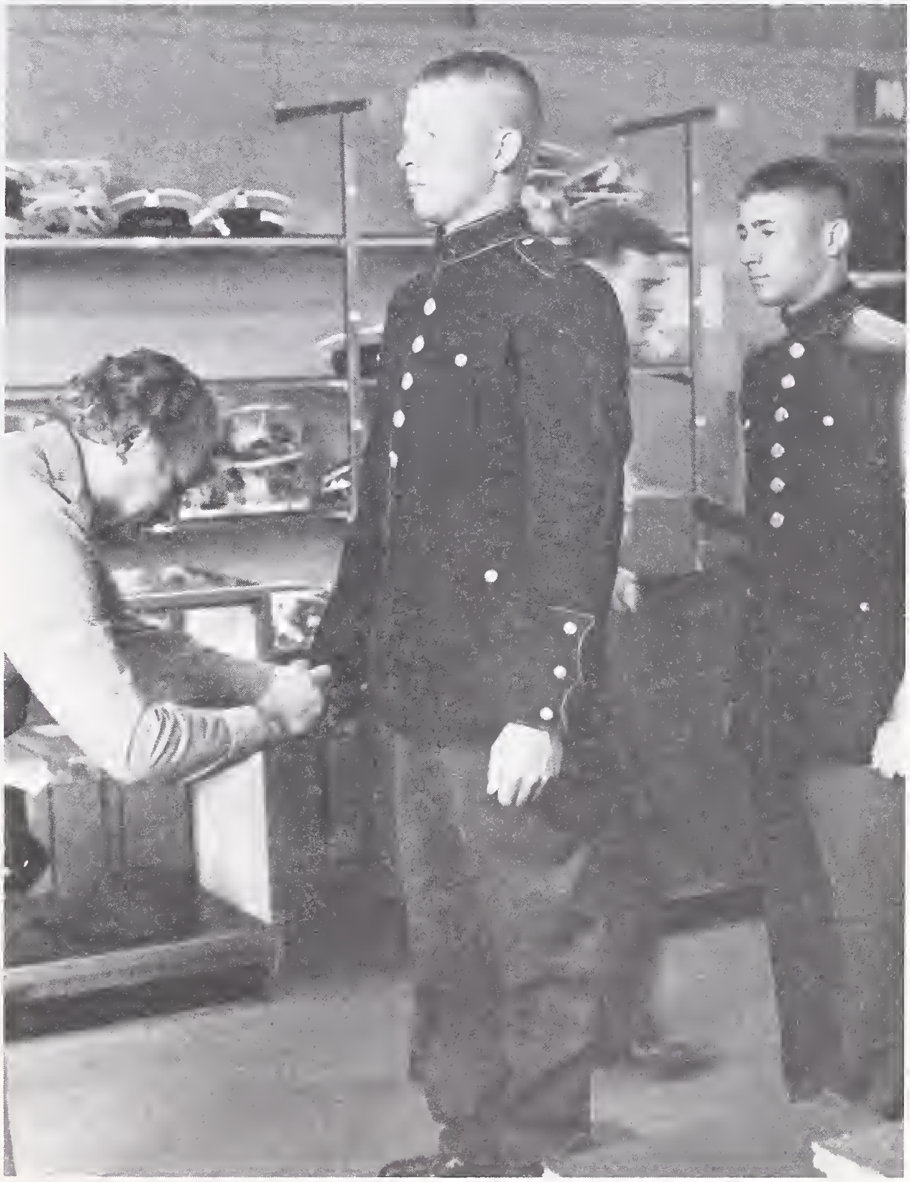
After demonstrating the knowledge they have acquired through physical and academic tests and inspections, successful Marines are graduated and assigned to Marine detachments aboard Navy ships such as aircraft carriers, guided missile cruisers and submarine tenders. While serving aboard ship, Marines are responsible for guarding designated areas of the vessel, performing ceremonial functions and carrying out duties which include damage control and ship security.

Marines are probably best known for security guard duty aboard ship. Guards are placed throughout the ship in security-sensitive areas.

Pomp and ceremonies for the ship are performed by sea-going Marines in age-old tradition. Snappy salutes, precision rifle drill, freshly pressed dress blues, spit-shined shoes and lots of gleaming brass, best portray these disciplined and highly motivated Marines in ceremony.

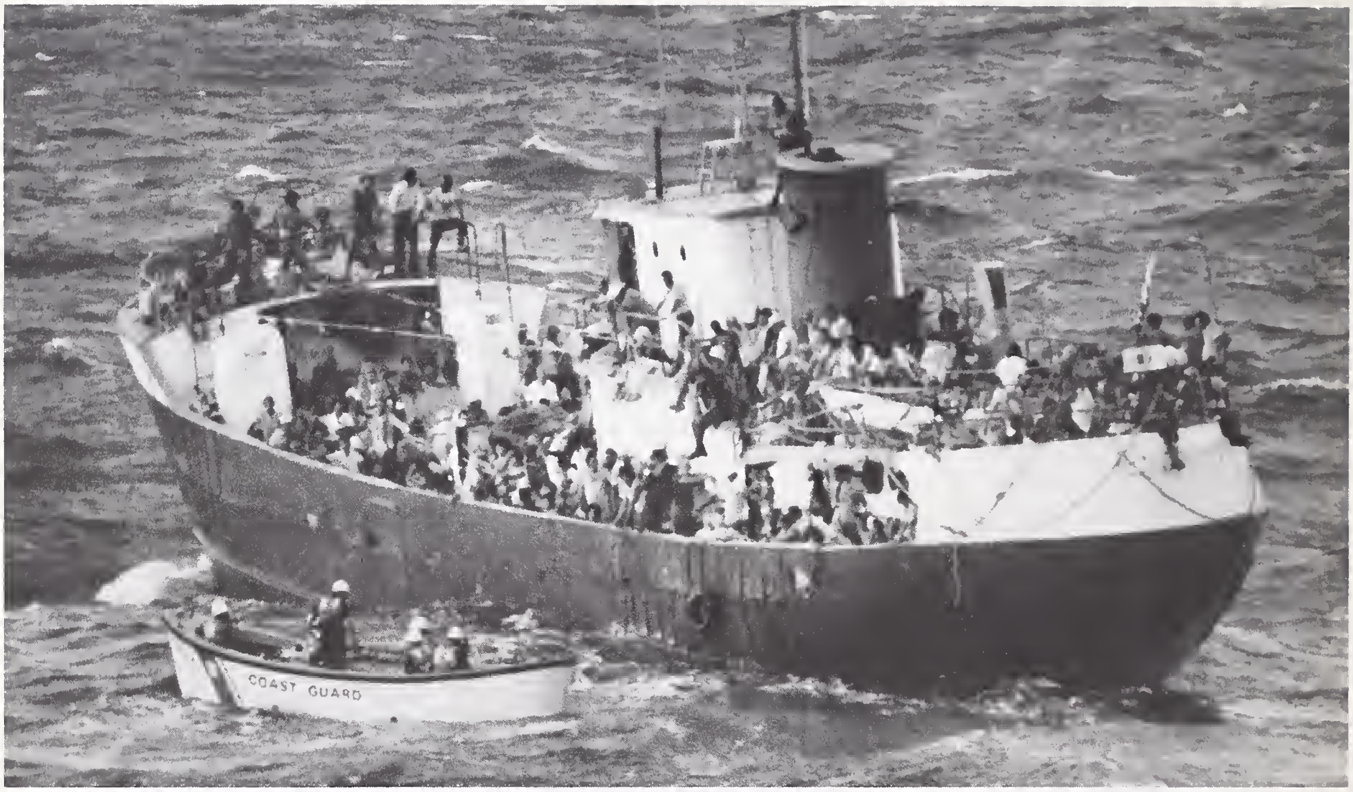
According to Capt. Michael Einsidler, director of Sea School, "Marines who successfully complete a tour of sea duty consider it one of the best and most rewarding duties in the Marine Corps today."

Though not all ships of the fleet are adorned by these "soldiers of the sea,'' those few which are, carry two centuries of tradition and pride with them. Admiral David Porter in 1863, described his feelings of seagoing Marines when he wrote, ''a ship without Marines is like a garment without buttons.'' Sea School in San Diego is one more important step in keeping the Navy and Marine Corps team ''tailor-made.''



The dress blue uniform is a distinguishing characteristic of a seagoing Marine. While serving aboard ship, he will participate in numerous ceremonial details. Students receive dress uniforms in the third week of training.

Editor's note: Our thanks to Sgt. Dave Vergun, GySgt. Dub Allen and Cpl. Susan Dubey of Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego for providing the research, photos and articles from which this story was compiled.



A Coast Guard motor surf boat stands by the Cuban vessel Red Diamond in the Straits of Florida. Between April and mid-July of this year, more than 100,000 Cuban refugees sought new beginnings in the United States.

Boat ride to freedom

Story by Paul Short
Photos by Brice Kenny

It has been called "The largest peacetime operation in Coast Guard history." Others have called it the "Cuban Boatlift" or "Freedom Flotilla." But whatever you choose to label it, the assistance and protection of refugees fleeing Cuba by boat this past spring will go down in history as one of the most dramatic rescue operations of all time.

More than one out of every 100 residents of Castro's Cuba chose to leave the island during the exodus. The only way out was by boat. Unfortunately, many of the boats were not seaworthy and virtually all of them were grossly overcrowded.

That's where the Coast Guard entered the picture. As the never ending string of fishing boats and runabouts began their convoy of human cargo from Mariel, Cuba to Key West, Fla., the Coast Guard amassed a flotilla of cutters and rescue boats to assist them. Between April and mid-July, 114,000 refugees, enough people to populate a city the size of New Haven, Conn. or Berkeley, Calif., had been landed at Key West. With the overcrowding and decrepit condition of many of the vessels, it is surprising that only 25 known deaths occurred during the exodus.

During normal times there are about 140 men and women stationed at the Key West Coast Guard Group. Search and rescue has always been the Group's primary mission, but in recent years surveillance of vessels suspected of smuggling narcotics has rivaled rescue work for their attention.

But in April, when Fidel Castro announced he was allowing dissatisfied Cubans to leave the country, things changed drastically for Key West Coast Guard personnel.

Within a few weeks there were a dozen Coast Guard cutters and several large U.S. Navy ships stationed between Key West and Cuba. The Coast Guard cutter Dallas, a 378-footer homeported in New York, was diverted from training at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and its commanding officer Capt. William J. Brogdon Jr. was named on-scene commander of the rescue forces.

Capt. Brogdon describes his reaction upon arrival in the Florida Straits: ''It was chaos. It was all we could do to keep up with the reports we were getting from distressed and sinking boats, let alone the ones we never heard from. It was not unusual to see a cutter towing four or more boats at a time.''

Ensign Terry Walsh of Essex, Conn., was in the boarding party that assisted the overloaded fishing vessel Crazy Horse. ''It was amazing. When I stepped aboard that boat the people stood up and cheered. It made me feel like a real hero.''

Half of the Dallas crewmembers stayed up all night to make their new passengers comfortable, Walsh said. Many of the refugees had nothing to eat for four days as they waited in the harbor at Mariel for transportation out of Cuba. Few of them had never been to sea and some of them were in such poor condition from malnutrition and seasickness that they may not have lived through the trip without medical attention.

In Key West, Fla., a U.S. Marine signals refugees to the next check-in station. Along with Coast Guard units, the Navy and Marine Corps played an integral part in the "Cuban Boatlift."

The Dallas and the other cutters in the operation made rescues without stop for days at a time. Twenty-four hour working days were common, yet Walsh said he had never seen morale higher.

''This is why people join the Coast Guard,'' he explained. ''On a 378 (378-ft. cutter such as the Dallas), you seldom get search and rescue cases. Before now we'd had only two cases this year. We've had 60 or 70 cases down here so far.''

Fortunately for some of the refugees, the more modern Coast Guard cutters are built with flight decks for helicopter landings. Cutters with critically ill Cubans aboard radioed for the choppers to swoop down and take the ailing passengers ashore.

Coast Guard photojournalist Al Faust reported that one lady who had been taken aboard the cutter Valiant was obviously in the final stages of labor. As she was being flown to the nearest hospital, she asked the aircrewman, ''Please sir, will my child be an American?''

Lt. Cmdr. Frank Couper of Upper Marlboro, Md., the executive officer aboard the cutter Vigorous, saved the life of another refugee by administering mouth to mouth resuscitation. The ship's hospital corpsman had been temporarily transferred to another cutter in need of his services and Couper found himself being pressed into service as his replacement.

While the larger cutters, such as Dallas and Valiant, were stationed near Cuban waters, the 82 and 95-ft. patrol boats were positioned closer to Key West. Since these smaller craft have only eight to 14 men and women in their crews, relief crewmembers from similar craft

Rescued Cuban refugees are ferried to the Coast Guard cutter Acushnet by the ship's motor lifeboat. The "Freedom Flotilla" was such a large operation, that additional Coast Guard units were ordered to provide assistance.

were flown to Key West from as far away as California and New England.

Even smaller utility boats were used in the harbor at the Old Key West Naval Station to tow the disabled and seized boats to moorings away from the overcrowded processing area. When it became obvious that the operation was too much for the Key West small boat stations, more 41- and 44-foot motor lifeboats and crewmen were ordered in to help.

Volunteers from various Coast Guard units and Coast Guard Reservists were flown to Key West where they checked into motels contracted by the Coast Guard and were soon assigned to boat crews.

Ashore, the refugees were greeted by an army of Customs, Immigration, Border Patrol and Coast Guard personnel. A battalion of Marines assisted refugees from the boats and kept order on the docks. Volunteer groups from the Cuban-American community and the Salvation Army dispensed free soft drinks, cigarettes, cold water, Bibles and wheel chairs.

Once they had been processed and identified, the refugees were whisked by bus to an unused hangar at the old Navy seaplane base where they were housed and fed until they could be transferred to resettlement camps. A detachment of Navy doctors, dentists and hospital corpsmen was made available to handle medical problems.

While the refugees' problems may have seemed to be coming to an end, the owners of the boats who had entered Cuba to bring the refugees to Key West were just beginning to realize theirs. All incoming boats were seized by Customs for violating U.S. law—entering Cuba without permission. This also prevented them from returning to Mariel for a second load.

Meanwhile, the rescuers became the enforcers at sea. Coast Guard cutters were given strict orders to stop all U.S. traffic that appeared to be headed for Cuba and turn them back. The interdiction phase of the operation had begun. Although this wasn't a popular task, it did slow the mass exodus to a trickle and finally to a halt.

For their persistence in helping the thousands of refugees, the participating Coast Guard, Navy and Marine Corps personnel were awarded the Humanitarian Service Medal. A small ribbon for their uniforms perhaps, but the memory of that poignant and dramatic episode will remain indelibly stamped in their minds.

Editor's note: PROFILE is indebted to Chief Petty Officer Lou Parris, Petty Officer 1st Class Al Faust and Petty Officer 3rd Class Greg Creedon, who did the research and furnished a majority of the material used in this article.

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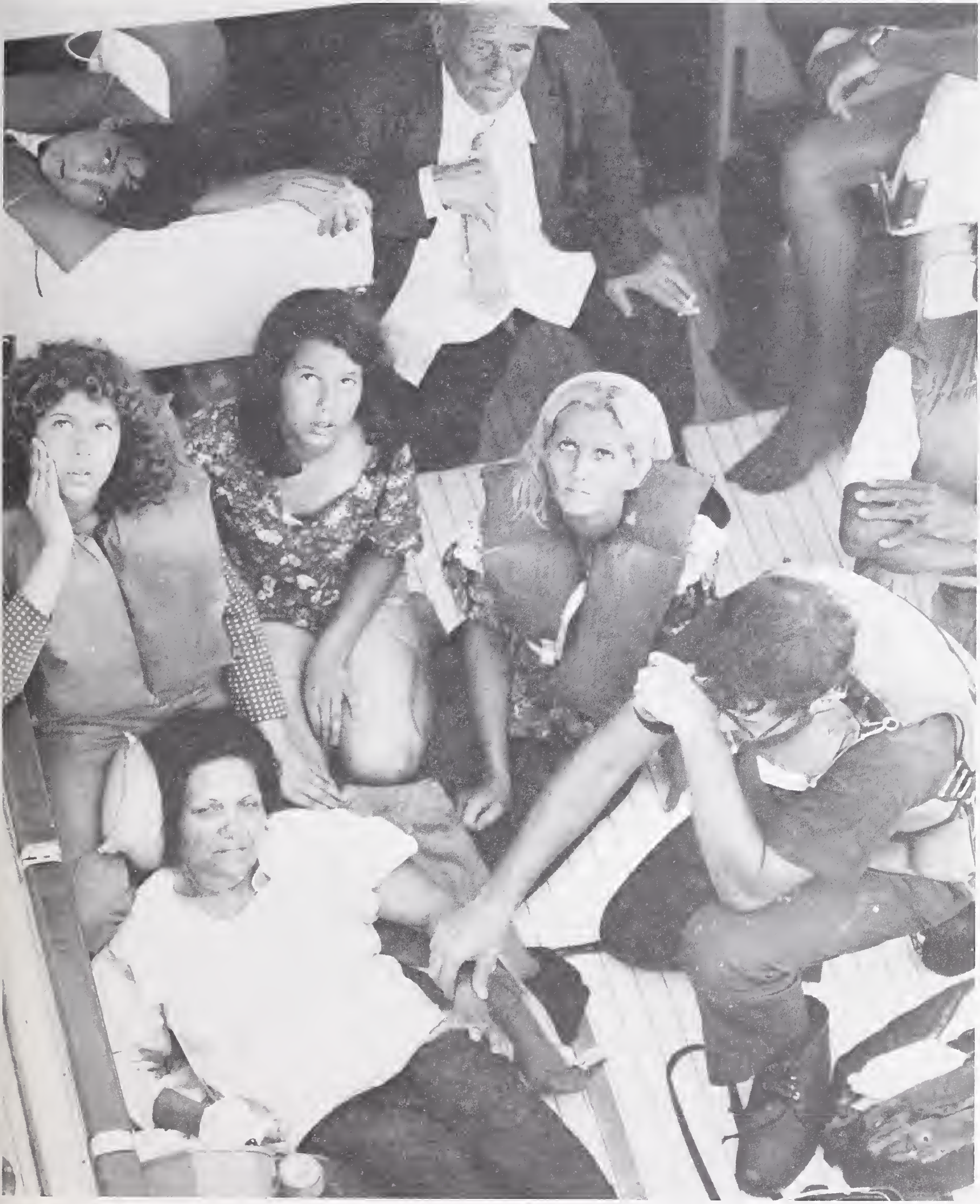

Confused and tired, these Cuban refugees wait to be transferred to the Coast Guard cutter Dallas in the Straits of Florida. Once on American soil, the refugees' odyssey of starting new lives would begin.

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